Retirement Scheme (VRS) has been implemented to downsize the work force to the level as envisaged in the revival package. Financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 126.63 crores has been given to the Corporation for liquidation of statutory and other liabilities, capital repair of vessels, completion of vessles sanctioned under 7th and 8th plan etc. Write off, of Government loan amounting to Rs. 425.98 crore has been effected. Retirement age has been rolled back to 58 years. Deep Sea ship Repair Division (RSD) has been closed w.e.f. 31.3.2002. As regards Rajabagan Dock Yard, the report of the valuers has been received.The implementation of the revival scheme is by and large as per the schedule.

Shifting of NE regional office of NWAI, Guwahati

1362. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has any proposal to restructure/shifting of the NE regional office of NWAI at Guwahati;

(b) if so, the details thereof showing present strength (cadre-wise) and reason behind such a move;

(c) the steps taken to strengthen the establishement to effectively manage NW-II including steps toward ensuring dredging of Brahmaputra; and

(d) the target set to place another dredger into operation as assured?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The present strength of manpower is adequate to manage NW-II effectively. As regards dredging in Brahmaputra one hydraulic surface dredger has already been positioned. Further, one Cutter Suction Dredging unit is under construction and is expected to be commissioned by March 2004.